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ABSTRACT

This report shares some lessons of projects, programs, and interventions that have identified or implemented innovative approaches to managing Africa's conflicts, and examines their potential applicability to other conflicts there or elsewhere. All of the projects described in the report have been supported by grants from the United States Institute of Peace. The report draws lessons from each case about how to replicate successes or turn past failures into future successes. Case material in the report is drawn from many parts of the African continent (Liberia, Ghana, Nigeria, Angola, South Africa, Mozambique, Somalia, Ethiopia, Sudan, Eritrea, Uganda, Zaire, Mali, Benin, Tanzania, Burundi, and Rwanda). The report offers the following articles: (1) "Innovative Diplomatic Initiatives" (Herman Cohen); (2) "NGOs Engaged in Preventive Action" (Barnett Rubin); (3) "Democratic Reform and Reform of African Militaries" (Julius Ihonvbere); (4) "Training for Peacemaking" (Hibaaq Osman); (5) "Building on Locally-Based and Traditional Peace Processes" (John Prendergast); (6) "Humanitarian Aid and Conflict Prevention" (John Prendergast); and (7) "Culture of Peace" (Carolyn Nordstrom). (BT)

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Creative Approaches to Managing Conflict in Africa

Findings from USIP-Funded Projects

Edited by David R. Smock

SO 031 416

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The purpose of this essay is to share some lessons of projects which have identified or implemented innovative approaches to managing Africa's conflicts, and examine their potential applicability to other conflicts there or elsewhere. All the projects described in this *Peaceworks* have been supported by grants from the U.S. Institute of Peace.

Each of the directors of these Institute-assisted projects was asked to distill project lessons regarding peacemaking in Africa with applicability beyond the specific cases dealt with in their projects. Their statements were then edited and adapted for inclusion in *Peaceworks*.

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES

The need for innovative approaches to managing conflict in Africa is immediately evident from daily headlines about war and killings in such countries as Rwanda, Burundi, Liberia, Sudan, Zaire, and Somalia, and growing tensions in others such as Nigeria.

In assessing the state of war and peace in Africa one must, however, balance the daily tragedies in these countries with the impressive achievements of peace and increasing normalcy in others like South Africa, Namibia, Mozambique, Uganda, Eritrea, and Zimbabwe. The fact that there are remarkable stories of successful peacemaking in many African countries helps to remind the predictors of continent-wide chaos and tragedy that warring African countries are not the norm. Nor will the existing wars last forever. Many wars have ended, and even in countries where tension and violence still prevail there are impressive examples of efforts to manage conflict.

This publication identifies some programs, projects, and interventions that have succeeded, and indicates the wide applicability of some. Lessons are drawn from each case about how either to replicate successes or turn past failures into future success.

Case material is drawn from many parts of the African continent—from Liberia, Ghana, Nigeria, Angola, South Africa, Mozambique, Somalia, Ethiopia, Sudan, Eritrea, Uganda, Zaire, Mali, Benin, Tanzania, Burundi, and Rwanda. The cases cited are not isolated anecdotes, but provide empirical findings linked to broader theories of peacemaking.

- **Innovative American Diplomatic Initiatives** Herman Cohen asserts that the United States has a special image in Africa and in turn a unique role to play in peacemaking and peacebuilding there. To play this role effectively, the State Department's Africa Bureau needs to make full use of U.S. embassies in key African countries; give American ambassadors in the field maximum leeway; coopt the U.S. national security community in its efforts; start early; and bring multilateral agencies into the process at an early stage.

- **African Mediation** Gilbert Khadiagala points out that the greatest strength of African mediators lies in their proximity to the disputes and their understanding of historical context. But neighborly interest does not necessarily translate into capacity for effective mediation. African mediators often do not have the necessary information available to them to be effective. The use of heads of state as mediators is usually constrained by their inability to devote the extended time that intensive and prolonged mediation requires.

- **NGOs Engaged in Preventive Action** Barnett Rubin describes the effect of the Burundi Policy Forum in assisting NGOs to form innovative partnerships with governments and multilaterals that are trying to limit further violence in Burundi. Elizabeth Cabot and Sir John Thomson report on a collaborative project between the Minority Rights Group and the United Nations in planning a strategy for the UN and other external powers to

help reverse the process of state and societal collapse in Zaire. Their principal recommendation is that priority be given to the stimulation of civil society in Zaire from the grassroots upward. The role of external actors should be limited to that of catalyst, offering information and modest financial support.

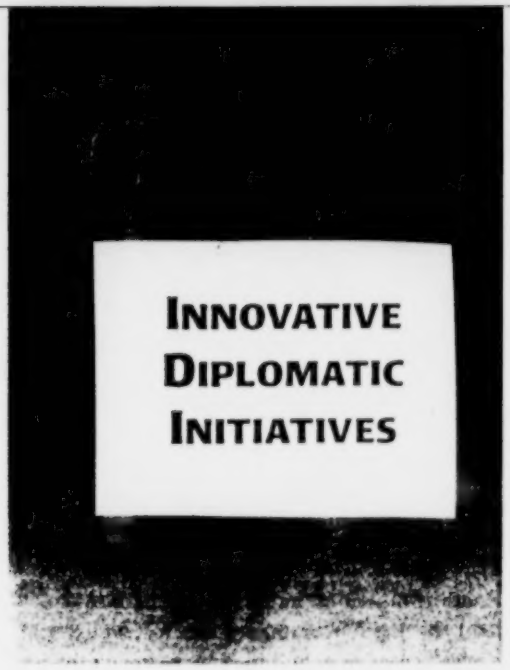
- **Democratic Reform and Reform of African Militaries** Julius Ihonvbere argues that religious conflict in Nigeria largely arises from political manipulation, and that the most effective means of managing it is through the introduction of genuine democratic reforms. Robin Luckham points out that the democratic transition underway in many African countries must include special attention to the future role of African militaries, civil-military relations, and consideration of whether the military is best controlled by excluding it from politics or by recognizing and institutionalizing its political role. Eboe Hutchful describes the instructive process through which Ghana's civil authorities have achieved democratic control over Ghana's military. The process was facilitated by the fact that Ghana's democratically elected president has a military background and brought special knowledge of the military to his civilian leadership.

- **Training for Peacemaking** Hibaaq Osman describes the effectiveness of a training program for Somali women in conflict resolution and the impact it is having at village and district levels. The most notable finding is the impact that women can play as peacemakers even in a male-dominated society like Somalia.

- **Building on Locally Based and Traditional Peace Processes** John Prendergast illustrates the importance of local peace initiatives in the Horn countries which use the traditional peacemaking roles of elders and rely on traditional peacemaking methods. Wal Duany describes a very significant peace process in 1993, built on traditional practices, organized to manage intra-ethnic conflict among the Nuer of southern Sudan after 1,300 people had been killed. Maxwell Owusu describes the critical peacemaking roles of traditional chiefs as well as church leaders in Ghana. Wolfgang Heinrich reveals the very limited effectiveness of the introduction of district councils to manage conflict in Somalia during 1993-95, primarily because the councils were viewed as rivals of traditional clan structures, as well as because the UN was too rigidly prescriptive and hasty in its efforts to organize them.

- **Humanitarian Aid and Conflict Prevention** Prendergast outlines a series of guidelines to ensure that humanitarian aid contributes to peace rather than exacerbating conflict. Aid givers, he says, need to do independent assessments of needs, be astute and flexible in the types of aid provided, study the effects of targeting and distribution methods, commit to independent monitoring and evaluation, and promote intercommunal trade and exchange.

- **Culture of Peace** Carolyn Nordstrom points out the degree to which a "culture of peace" that reinforces progress toward peace and reconciliation has developed in Mozambique in the post-settlement period. She also contrasts Mozambique with Angola, where no parallel culture of peace has appeared.



INNOVATIVE DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVES

During the 1980s and early 1990s, the United States was the most active and effective diplomatic force in efforts to resolve Africa's many civil wars, though after the debacle in Somalia, the United States has progressively withdrawn from its activist program and more of the burden of peacemaking has been passed to Africans. One project examining diplomatic initiatives draws lessons from American intervention in Africa during the Bush administration, and another assesses problems and prospects faced by African mediators who have intervened in East African conflicts.

AMERICAN DIPLOMATIC INTERVENTION

When the Bush administration took office in 1989, the Cold War rationale for assisting specific African countries was virtually gone, but assisting Africa to achieve self-sustaining economic growth remained very compelling. As a consequence, the State Department's Bureau of African Affairs had a highly activist policy of diplomatic intervention in African conflicts during Bush's presidency.

With a USIP grant Herman J. Cohen, assistant secretary of state for African affairs during the Bush administration, is writing a book to reflect on American diplomatic intervention in seven significantly different internal conflicts in African countries. Each country has its own character and the root causes of each conflict were unique. In addition, the countries' political and economic systems differed widely and the conflicts were at different stages when the Africa Bureau launched an initiative. Nevertheless, there are some general conclusions worth drawing from the Bureau's experiences in dealing with these conflicts.

First, says Cohen, ***working-level decision-making and willpower can make a difference.*** As assistant secretary, Cohen decided to push the policy envelope as much as possible. He and his colleagues pursued a highly activist approach, with considerable energy exerted by American embassies in Africa, and with extensive personal diplomacy by American diplomats. The Africa Bureau also engaged in a vigorous policy of bringing other national security agencies on board. (If the Africa Bureau had decided to pursue a relatively passive policy, higher political levels would probably not even have noticed, much less criticized them.) While the Bureau did not justify its activist approach as "vital to U.S. national security interests," Cohen and his colleagues were able to demonstrate that they could pursue their goals within existing resources and without damaging other U.S. interests. The highest-level policymakers understood this approach, had confidence in their judgment, and let them proceed.

The United States has a special image in Africa that no other country has. The sole remaining superpower exercises a special influence in Africa, particularly in conflict situations where frightened protagonists need psychological bolstering by a neutral entity. The experience of the Africa Bureau in the seven conflict situations Cohen describes demonstrated that one or both sides to a conflict usually welcomes American involvement because of the perception that only the United States can supply the security guarantees that will ensure that agreements are implemented. The United States has to be careful to use its influence constructively, as was demonstrated decisively in Ethiopia, Angola, and Mozambique.

In Ethiopia, for example, the Bureau's intervention had some unintended consequences. After the United States took over the mediation of the war between Ethiopia and Eritrean insurgents, the Ethiopian army's will to continue the war eroded rapidly. With the United States involved, the assumption was that the war would be over soon, and nobody wanted to be the last to be killed in combat. The weight of American influence also became evident during detailed military negotiations in Mozambique and Angola; American military experts were able to persuade

negotiators to accept certain dispositions for the combatants where others had failed, because the negotiating parties had confidence in the United States. Cohen and his colleagues also found that African government leaders were sometimes able to overcome internal opposition to negotiations by invoking the influence of the American government. This was particularly true in the case of Mozambique, where President Chissano exploited the "pressure" he said was being exerted by Presidents Reagan and Bush.

The network of U.S. embassies in selected African countries is a vital element to an activist approach. The Bureau's efforts to advance conflict solutions in Angola, Ethiopia, the Sudan, and Liberia benefited considerably from information supplied, and actions taken, by neighboring U.S. embassies. Keeping them well informed paid off handsomely in advancing the Bureau's objectives. Thanks to the embassy in Khartoum, for example, the Bureau's relations with the Ethiopian insurgents were key to its ability to help bring about the end of that war with a soft landing in 1991. Intensive diplomacy by U.S. ambassadors in Gabon, Congo, Zaire, and Cape Verde helped stimulate Angolan negotiations in 1989. Extending the "information net" to embassies in western Europe, especially London, Paris, Brussels, Lisbon, Geneva, and the Vatican, was also very fruitful. London was a very active center of valuable information on the Sudan, Somalia, and Ethiopia. Lisbon was naturally a hotbed of Angolan politics. The UN agencies and international NGOs in Geneva were a rich source of information and insights about conflict situations. Since sensitive United States interests were not involved in any of the conflicts, there was no need for the Bureau to replicate the tight secrecy of the Kissinger era.

Coopting the U.S. national security community is essential. The Bureau used the national security coordinating system intensively in order to make sure it would not encounter opposition at the working levels of other agencies, and more importantly, to solicit their advice and support. This was especially important in the case of the Department of Defense, the CIA, and the National Security Council (NSC). But working with the U.S. Information Agency (USIA) and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) was also very fruitful. In Somalia, for example, the Bureau worked closely with AID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) to call higher-level attention to the growing tragedy between May and October 1992. During implementation of the Angolan peace accords between June 1991 and September 1992, Defense, AID, and USIA contributed innovative and low-cost solutions to a number of problems. Who would have imagined, for example, that the Arizona Air National Guard could be persuaded to do its 1992 annual exercises flying ballot boxes and election workers to the farthest reaches of Angola?

Starting early is better than starting late. This was illustrated best in Somalia, where the Bureau could discern the beginnings of a severe crisis when government forces essentially destroyed the city of Hargeisa in 1988 in the course of suppressing a rebellion. Cohen and his colleagues were inhibited from taking an activist approach with the regime by the ongoing American requirement to maintain access to the naval and air facility at Berbera on Somalia's north coast, the strategic back door to the Persian Gulf and the Arabian peninsula. So long as this access was required, the State Department was reluctant to rock the boat by applying diplomatic pressure on the Siad Barre regime. When the United States finally did intervene militarily in December 1992, the cost was very high and the United States ended by losing the facility anyway. Exerting "tough love" with friends at an early stage of conflict, says Cohen, is the best way to uphold American strategic and economic interests.

Talk to everyone. When high-level U.S. diplomats talk to insurgent groups, they gain instant legitimacy–and a delicate balance must be maintained if the United States also wants to maintain good relations with the regime in power. Cohen and his colleagues learned the value of talking to everyone without worrying about injured sensibilities. The Bureau began a dialogue with RENAMO in Mozambique after their predecessors had snubbed it, helping hasten the onset of negotiations, Cohen believes. The Sudanese regimes objected to American dialogue with the SLPA rebels in the south, but privately used American channels to send messages to the south. The United States, as a global power, can pull this off, indicates Cohen, and should exploit the technique to the fullest. The Bureau's dialogue with the Ethiopian insurgents was especially fruitful in bringing that conflict to an end.

Bring the multilaterals in early. If the UN is going to be involved in a final peace agreement, it should be in at the beginning. Cohen believes that he and his colleagues made a mistake in the Angola negotiations by including UN peacekeeping and election monitoring as part of the peace process without requesting UN experts to sit at the negotiating table. If UN experts had been there, they would have informed those

involved how inadequate and unworkable some of the arrangements would turn out to be. The same mistake was not made in the Mozambican negotiations, where the UN was brought in at an early stage.

Don't be obsessed with signing ceremonies. Diplomatic mediators, whose countries do not have a direct stake in the outcome, are usually so happy to see warring protagonists agree that they are willing to acquiesce to inadequate and unworkable formulas just for the sake of agreement. This was true in Angola and Rwanda, and both the Rwanda agreement and the original Angola agreement had serious flaws. In Angola there was a severe problem, which was predictable, of the sequencing of implementation. In the case of Rwanda, the Arusha agreement was a model on paper. There was only one problem: the real Rwandan government—the people with the guns—were not really part of the process. Mediators and observers should be ready to blow the whistle on such Potemkin agreements even if the protagonists are ready to sign. Frequently, such flawed agreements constitute a signal that the protagonists see the peace process more as a continuation of the war in another form—and an opportunity to rest and regroup between battles—than as a new peaceful beginning for their countries. This was clearly the case in Angola, Rwanda, and Liberia.

Give ambassadors maximum leeway. The emphasis of Cohen and his colleagues on conflict resolution as a high priority for U.S. policy in Africa sent a strong signal to American embassies in the field. In those countries where the precursors to violent conflict were particularly obvious, American ambassadors did not feel they needed permission to play active roles in conflict management. All Cohen required was that they keep Washington informed. In Togo the U.S. ambassador was part of a U.S.-French-German troika working to safeguard a very fragile transition to multiparty democracy. In Congo, the embassy played a key role in defusing political tensions connected to the country's first free and fair elections. In the Central African Republic, the ambassador took the lead in preventing the outgoing military regime from hijacking democratic elections. In South Africa there is still a valuable story to be told about how American ambassadors engaged in significant "invisible" mediation to help the transition from apartheid to majority rule.

By the end of the Bush administration, the experiences of the Africa Bureau had yielded a wide variety of results, from euphoric to disappointing to inconclusive. Cohen concludes that the immense range of the Bureau's diplomatic interventions in the relatively short period of four years was all the more astounding given the fact that its strategy was entirely self-generated and not the result of direction from higher levels. The Bureau stayed out of trouble, avoided embarrassment for the administration, and did not incur extra costs beyond extensive travel for negotiators and experts.

Cohen concludes that in the final analysis the most promising outcome of these policies began to unfold in 1992, when the Organization of African Unity finally recognized the anomaly of Africans doing little to help resolve the continent's civil wars, while the Americans were intensely engaged. By mid-1996, with the number of civil wars decreasing, Africans were taking the lead in the search for solutions to the most intractable in Burundi, Liberia, and Sudan, with the United States and other external parties playing supporting roles.

AFRICAN MEDIATION

African interventions—in the Liberian civil war, the threat to public order in Lesotho, and the threat of chaos and genocide in Burundi—demonstrate a new level of assertiveness in African internal conflicts. African mediators addressing conflicts in East and Central Africa have only had limited success, but their experiences help highlight the requirements for the future. The most promising process is that led by former Tanzanian president Julius Nyerere, to try to manage the tragic conflict between Hutus and Tutsis in Burundi.

Gilbert Khadiagala of Kent State University, with support from a grant from the Institute of Peace, has undertaken a study of several cases of African mediation in East and Central Africa, highlighting some of the shortcomings of past mediation and the requirements for the future. Although in the past African mediators, usually heads of state, confined their efforts to conflicts between states, there has recently been a remarkable shift toward mediation of domestic conflicts, consistent with the OAU's recent shift to considering domestic conflicts a legitimate concern. This shift has been reinforced by the involvement of regional organizations in West Africa, southern Africa, and East Africa in mediation of civil conflict in their respective regions.

The greatest strength of African mediators lies in their proximity to the disputes and their understanding of the historical context. African diplomacy has

been characterized by mediation originating from geographically proximate states. Khadiagala asserts that this pattern will remain a fixture of African intervention, largely because conflicts in regional neighborhoods heighten interest that galvanizes response by local actors. Kenya and Tanzania were drawn into mediating conflicts in Uganda and Rwanda largely because of the perception that their civil wars had significant repercussions for regional stability. The same conceptual base underlies the ongoing intervention by the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD) in Sudan's civil war.

But neighborly interest does not necessarily translate into capacity for effective mediation. Frequently civil wars and refugee flows propel neighbors to intervene in contiguous conflicts without the resources and capacity for effective mediation, says Khadiagala. Thus Kenya, inspired by the mission of helping its "Ugandan brothers," intervened in 1985 without sufficient information about either the parties or the course of the conflict. In the end, a protracted and unsuccessful mediation severely affected Kenya's relationship with post-settlement Uganda.

In all three cases, enormous information gaps negatively affected the mediation processes. In all three cases that Khadiagala studied, the mediators groped in the dark for crucial information on such basic issues as cease-fire compliance, the identity of negotiating parties, and negotiating parameters and positions of parties.

Information gaps are most easily overcome when there are credible African mediators who command the trust of the disputants. For example, Rwandan parties perceived Tanzania, because of its record of successful nationbuilding, as a "natural" mediator in the Arusha talks on Rwanda's civil war, rather than Zaire.

While mediation by heads of state (as in the IGAD talks on Sudan and the Nairobi talks on Uganda) lends credibility to the process, the slow and painstaking nature of mediation often cannot compete effectively with other burdens of state. Moreover, when heads of state stake their domestic and regional reputations on successful outcomes, the quest for quick agreements overshadows the mediation process. Tanzania partially overcame this problem during the Arusha negotiations by assigning the mediation to a professional foreign ministry official, thus reducing the overexposure of the head of the state.

The credibility and character of mediators is even more critical in internal conflicts than in interstate conflict. For example, African mediators who prescribe power-sharing arrangements as a possible basis for resolution of conflict confront credibility problems when they lack such arrangements in their own countries. Kenya's President Daniel Arap Moi's mediation role in both the Uganda and Sudan talks raised questions of credibility along these lines, reinforcing the perception that his intervention might have been an attempt at diversion from Kenya's internal problems.

IGAD's multilateral effort to help Sudan enabled a pooling of resources that seemed to provide an answer to the perennial power constraints that bedevil African mediators. But the IGAD mediators have been unable to articulate common visions of their roles and sustain adequate attention to their intervention. In addition, regional mediators, insofar as they are interested parties, are vulnerable to manipulation by the disputants, a device employed by the warring parties in Sudan. In addition, conflicts among the IGAD states themselves have sometimes overshadowed the primary conflict. Thus, IGAD's initial intervention to check the contagious effects of the Sudanese civil war has produced new sets of regional conflicts of equal concern.

Nyerere's current efforts in Burundi partially demonstrate how some of these dilemmas can be successfully addressed. He is a mediator with a credible domestic and international record, unencumbered by national tasks, but backed by strong regional action and a strong international consensus that his peacemaking is the best hope for settling civil conflict in Burundi.

NGOs Engaged in Preventive Action

Efforts to prevent and contain internal conflicts in Africa have recently moved beyond governments and intergovernmental organizations. While intervention in Africa's conflicts has traditionally been the realm of official diplomacy, NGOs are beginning to become important actors. In part this derives from the increasing reluctance of foreign governments to assume the burdens of peacemaking. But it also reflects a recognition that NGOs have special competence and access that can supplement the capabilities of governments and intergovernmental organizations. The case of the Burundi Policy Forum and the efforts of the Minority Rights Group (USA) to assist the UN deal with Zaire illustrate this.

BURUNDI POLICY FORUM

In early 1995 four organizations—the Center for Preventive Action of the Council on Foreign Relations, Search for Common Ground, Refugees International, and the African-American Institute—with funding from the U.S. Institute of Peace, organized the Burundi Policy Forum to address the growing crisis in Burundi. Principal responsibility for the Forum rests with Barnett Rubin of the Center for Preventive Action.

At the time various NGOs were providing humanitarian assistance to refugees from Rwanda in Burundi and to displaced persons within Burundi, offering conflict resolution training in Burundi, and working on civil-military relations, democratization, human rights, and other activities. What was lacking was a forum to coordinate the activities of NGOs working in Burundi as well as to coordinate them with the U.S. government and the UN Secretary General's Special Representative in Bujumbura. A forum was also conceived as a way of sharing information on the rapidly evolving situation in Burundi.

The Burundi Policy Forum (BPF) was organized in January 1995 and has functioned since as a mechanism to share information and coordinate strategies. It convenes representatives of dozens of humanitarian, advocacy, and conflict resolution organizations working in Burundi, together with officials of international organizations and governments. These organizations include several bureaus of the Department of State, the OAU, USAID, the CIA, the NSC, the Department of Defense, the embassies of Burundi, Rwanda, Canada, and France, the UN Department of Political Affairs, the UN Department for Humanitarian Affairs, UNHCR, UNICEF, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the many NGOs which work in Burundi. The Forum constitutes a unique configuration of organizations unlike any group addressing issues on any other country. It convenes both regular public meetings and closed meetings of special working groups focused on security and refugee repatriation, most of which are held in Washington.

Individual humanitarian NGOs often work with official humanitarian agencies, but rarely coordinate their work with those in the political field. NGOs frequently compete for funding, seeking to stake out positions for themselves, which complicates coordination and cooperation. The Forum provides a framework in which a variety of participants can exchange information and develop ideas and strategies collectively. It has also served as an instrument for early warning. Since the situation in the entire Central African Great Lakes region is interconnected, the Burundi Policy Forum has also served to monitor and mobilize reaction to events in Rwanda and Zaire, particularly in regard to refugee repatriation and the flow of weapons into the region.

Since its foundation, the Forum's schedule of regular meetings has generated more continuous attention to the ongoing Burundi crisis by the U.S. government, NGOs, and such other participants as the UN and the media than otherwise would have occurred. The relevant government officials working on Burundi know that the Forum exists as a venue for many Burundi-concerned organizations, and they are

regularly expected to brief and interact with the group. The Forum has also provided a venue for persons knowledgeable about Burundi to ask government officials tough questions in a non-confrontational, constructive, and problem-solving setting.

The Forum provides an opportunity for Burundi officials to be heard in Washington. In October 1995 Burundi's president Sylvestre Ntibantunganya spoke at the Forum. This event was televised in Burundi, where many felt it had some effect in protecting Ntibantunganya from assassination by Tutsi extremists in the military. Pierre Buyoya, who came to power through a military coup in late July 1996, was the main speaker at the June 1996 Forum.

The Forum has also strengthened the ability of mid-level staffers within the U.S. government and the UN to promote more attention to the conflict and advance new policy ideas with their superiors within the bureaucracy. The Forum provides them with a place outside the regular system to gain information, discuss ideas, and get broader perspectives on the crisis than are fostered by their bureaucratic milieu. It is particularly helpful when Burundi officials and representatives of Burundi NGOs speak to the Forum, which also provides a place for the U.S. government to present the nuances and reasoning in government policy that cannot be provided through press conferences and press releases.

As a result of its work on the Forum, the Center for Preventive Action has been involved in continued informal consultation with the mission of the Special Representative of the Secretary General, the special envoys of President Clinton to Burundi, the Carter Center, the Community of Sant' Egidio in Rome, International Alert in London, and International Crisis Group on peacemaking efforts in the region. Partly at the urging of the Center for Preventive Action, former president Jimmy Carter began to pay attention to the situation in Burundi and Rwanda. Carter's staff began to attend the Forum regularly, and Carter then convened a meeting of the heads of state of Rwanda, Burundi, Zaire, Uganda, and Tanzania in Cairo in November 1995 and in Tunis in March 1996. Lionel Rosenblatt, president of Refugees International and a co-sponsor of the Forum, attended the Cairo and Tunis conferences as a special advisor to former President Carter.

Being intended as mainly a focal point for exchanging information among mostly Washington-based individuals and organizations, the Forum is inherently limited in how much it can directly alleviate the conflict in Burundi. However, prominent Burundi officials know of the Forum and are thus aware that a nucleus of Washington organizations is watching their country with considerable interest. This spotlight effect may itself have some importance on moderating the conflict. Nevertheless, the Forum's main impact comes indirectly, by influencing the process by which important international actors understand and deal with conflict and coordinate their actions and interventions.

MINORITY RIGHTS GROUP ADDRESSES ZAIRE

Minority Rights Group (USA), a small NGO with its office in New York, received a grant from the Carnegie Corporation to explore "concepts and mechanisms to prevent ethnic conflict." A crucial part of this program was concerned with improving preventive diplomacy through the United Nations. A project focusing on Zaire, supported by the Institute of Peace, was part of this wider program, and is included here because of the innovative nature of the collaboration between an NGO and the UN over an African crisis.

MRG (USA) has special qualifications in this area because it is linked with MRG (International), in London, which has a quarter century's experience in the field of minority rights and ethnic conflict, and because Sir John Thomson, formerly British Ambassador to the UN, is a member of the Councils of both organizations. Moreover, Elizabeth Cabot, formerly the MRG (International) representative at the UN, is presently the Executive Director of MRG (USA).

The situation in Zaire was chosen as a test case for trying innovative cooperation procedures between the UN and an NGO (even though some would not be considered unusual within sophisticated government structures). Zaire was selected for a mix of reasons. The situation at the outset of the project was serious but not desperate; some goodwill existed between different groups and communities within the country; the gathering crisis was in a pre-military phase appropriate to preventive diplomacy; and the costs of preventive diplomacy looked manageable. Thus, Zaire seemed a fair, if hard, test of new procedures which, if successful, might be duplicated elsewhere.

The essential elements of the procedure are the appointment of a research leader and the preparation, discussion, and amendment of a report by the research leader and circulation of the report to those concerned with monitoring and policy, followed by a series of

discussion workshops. Subsequent action depends upon the conclusions of the workshops and the UN staff involved. The MRG (USA) involvement was naturally greatest in the early steps of the procedures, but as more policy members were involved, the more they came to "own" both the process and the product. For this reason, the following brief account of the project's conclusions on Zaire concentrate on MRG (USA)'s insights and should not be understood as necessarily representing the views of UN policymakers.

The international community has found Zaire a frustrating case. For example, the World Bank felt obliged to suspend its operations there in 1993 and has made it clear that it will return only if the Zairian authorities actually put the agreed-upon policies into effect. The timetable of political reforms has slipped by at least two years and those involved have in consequence lost a great degree of credibility. The "troika"—that is, the governments of Belgium, France, and the United States working together—have found it difficult to make progress in helping Zaire emerge from its prolonged economic and political malaise and the pace of negotiations has slowed to a walk. There is a great deal of discussion about elections in Zaire with UN monitoring in summer 1997, but many doubt the timetable will be met.

Zaire presents the remarkable spectacle of a collapsed state. Sovereign and governmental institutions still exist but do not operate effectively. The political classes are concerned only with their own interests, and the official economy has been overtaken by the unofficial, even though Zaire is richly endowed with natural advantages. Altogether (and despite serious conflict in eastern Zaire), it is surprising that the country has not lapsed into total chaos. This situation and the reasons for it are analyzed in the recently published report "Zaire: Predicament and Prospects, A Report to the Minority Rights Group (USA)" by project research leader Jean-Claude Willame et al. (Peaceworks No. 11, United States Institute of Peace, 1997).

The main political and economic recommendations are designed to revive civil society in Zaire from the grassroots upward. They bypass, without neglecting, the official structure of the collapsed state and build on existing self-help, grassroots activities taking place in some parts of Zaire and aim to expand them to other parts of the country. They suggest procedures by which the international community, especially the UN and its agencies, acting in imaginative ways through normal channels, might assist the growth of civil society. The emphasis is all on assisting Zairians at the local level who show a real inclination to help themselves. It is not proposed that outsiders should come forward with new and expensive economic development programs.

On the contrary, the chief function of the outsiders should be to act as a catalyst for action, to provide a source of information and encouragement, and to fund—at a very modest level, for a limited time—promising local initiatives. There is no part of Zairian society, including the government and the army, which could not contribute to the regeneration of economic activity and political democracy through the benevolent and cooperative activities of given individuals. The emphasis is away from heavy-handed bureaucracy toward the initiation and regulation of such activities through informal local groups. NGOs, both Zairian and international, could be expected to play major roles.

The prospects for success along these lines are brighter than those for progress along other paths, including those linked to presidential and parliamentary elections, the authors assert. But any progress depends fundamentally on avoiding an increase in violence. Such an unfortunate development is a real possibility.

- The report proposes that the office of the UN Secretary General's Special Representative in Zaire should be revived to orchestrate the peacemaking and political transition strategy coherently, and that the Zairian government be kept in touch with developments. It is recommended that the Special Representative should operate in a low-key way with a small staff who should be mainly in the field to encourage the flowering of local initiatives.

8

DEMOCRATIC REFORM AND REFORM OF AFRICAN MILITARIES

Most observers would agree that while external intervention can help resolve internal conflicts in Africa, the best long-term cure is the introduction of democratic reforms. A key component of a democratic reform movement is civilian control over the military, often a key instigator of conflict.

The movement for democratic reform in Africa has made very impressive strides over the last decade. But there has been some backsliding in countries like Kenya, Niger, and Burundi. The movement needs reinforcement and the three studies cited in this section offer guidance about how this can be accomplished.

THE NEED FOR DEMOCRATIC REFORM IN NIGERIA

Julius Ihonvbere of the University of Texas at Austin is completing a USIP-funded study of religious conflict in Nigeria. Its primary objective has been to examine the causes and politics of religious violence in contemporary Nigeria. Religion has become a major source of conflict challenging not just the survival of Nigeria as a nation, but also the possibility of national reconstruction, growth, development, and peace. It has divided Nigeria between north and south, Christian and Muslim, rich and poor. Among the questions Ihonvbere has tried to address are: What were the remote and immediate causes of religious violence? Why were they so predominant in the northern part of the country? What were the interests behind the conflicts, and why did they become so violent and destructive? Why has the state been unable to manage or prevent the conflicts? Is there a correlation between Nigeria's deepening economic crisis and the acts of violence? What is the way out of the problem?

The research—against the background of Nigeria's history, the foreign origins of both religions, the effects they have had on the construction of socioeconomic and political institutions and relations, and the overall character of the struggle for power and hegemony within classes, communities, regions, and other locations—reached the following conclusions.

It is very difficult to attribute a purely religious explanation to any of the nominally religious conflicts in the country, including those in Kano, Kaduna, Bulumkutu, Kafanchan, Ilorin, Bauchi, Zango Kantaf—especially the more violent, destructive, and publicized ones.

Virtually all the conflicts had direct and/or indirect political undertones and were encouraged, plotted, or sponsored by prominent political/religious elements who had specific and broad interests to protect and advance.

Religion was in many instances only a cover for deep-rooted strains and divisions in the body politic, which erupted into acts of violence and destruction as powerful political elements tried to protect their political domains, make political points, and reclaim assumed spheres of influence.

Where religion was involved, conflict usually arose not just from intolerance and provocative pronouncements and actions by leaders of both religions, but from fundamentalist proclivities of many Christians and Muslims. For example, the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) was created less as a religious than a political organization to challenge the *Jama'atu Nasril Islam* (JNI), its Muslim equivalent. Strident evangelical Christian groups have their Muslim equivalent in the Muslim Studies Society (MSS). Both are very militant, well funded from abroad, intolerant of others within and outside their faiths, and have very little or no regard for the secularity of the Nigerian state.

The religious, regional, ethnic, cultural and other ramifications of violence in Nigeria cannot be clearly understood, according to Ihonvbere, outside a holistic and dialectical understanding of the crises, coalitions, contradictions, and conflicts of Nigeria's distinctive political economy, the struggle for power, class contradictions and conflicts, the weaknesses of civil society,

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the failure of the peripheral state and the withdrawal of the populace into the security of organizations based on primordial identities. As well, foreign meddling in religious matters, and the propensity of the Nigerian power elite to manipulate rather than mediate religious intolerance, differences, and conflicts have served the interests of an unsteady state and a largely decadent and unproductive elite which dominates and controls it.

Religion will continue to play a major role in Nigerian life and politics. What is uncertain is the ability of the state and the dominant classes to continue to manipulate religion for their political goals. Of course, foreign interest groups, religious and non-religious, will continue to strive for influence within Nigeria. If the religiously-based political violence is not curtailed, it will get more destructive and more violent as drug dealers, currency traffickers, scammers, and opportunistic politicians capitalize on popular frustration to advance their narrow political interests. Moreover, these disturbances could degenerate into deeper conflicts, sustained over longer periods, if the parties in conflict are propelled by ethnic, religious, or regional forms of fanaticism.

It is possible to make all sorts of suggestions for ending the conflicts; for example that dialogues be created, patriotism encouraged, tolerance advocated, and adherence to the pacific teachings in the Bible and Koran supported. But Ihonvbere concludes they are generally cosmetic and superficial. In fact, these admonitions, preached by various political, ethnic and religious leaders over the last two decades, have not stopped the recurrence of religious conflicts. The Nigerian state remains extremely repressive and distant from popular constituencies and incapable of effectively mediating conflict. Deteriorating living conditions continue to encourage primary identification with narrow cultural and social interests, since the state's incapacity to manage conflict or improve things hardly inspires loyalty. Declaring Nigeria a secular state in the constitution has proven equally insufficient, since the constitution is not respected, the judiciary is not independent, and there are no programs designed to foster a national agenda.

Ihonvbere asserts that three main issues need to be addressed: the reconstruction of the Nigerian state and the basis of power and politics; the strengthening of civil society; and the genuine democratization of the political system.

The nature of the Nigerian state is the main problem. Constituted as an exploitative colonial system, it was inherited intact by the new nationalists at political independence in 1960. It has remained largely irrelevant to the conditions of the people. According to Ihonvbere, under the control of a tiny, corrupt portion of the Nigerian bourgeoisie, the state has been used for private accumulation rather than the public good. Lacking political control, the Nigerian state has maintained its power through the suffocation of civil society, the manipulation of ascriptive loyalties, intimidation, and proceeding as a kleptocracy.

Grossly inefficient, and lacking viable national symbols, the Nigerian state is perceived as an exploitative, decadent, and unstable force to be evaded and subverted at the slightest opportunity. The Nigerian state has never been a state of the people, according to Ihonvbere. It has never been truly democratic, accountable, open, and sufficiently powerful to respond to the needs of Nigerian citizens in general. This has allowed adventurers and opportunists to manipulate religion and use violence to create diversions and gain access to state power and resources. Ihonvbere argues that profound reconstruction is necessary if the state is not to continue to provide cover for the very interests that seek to subvert it.

Civil society must also be strengthened. Unlike in the 1960s and 1970s, contemporary Nigeria is almost awash with popular politically engaged groups. Nigeria's political landscape is beginning to benefit from the activities of organizations ranging from human rights groups and environmental movements, to pro-democracy and women's organizations, to professional and cultural associations as well as the press. If these organizations practice internal democracy, mobilize and educate their members and the public, and take openly democratic positions, the ability of the politicians and the military to manipulate them will be reduced. In fact, Ihonvbere argues, a viable and vibrant civil society is the only check to military adventurism, political irresponsibility, unbridled corruption and waste, and the manipulation of cultural symbols and primordial loyalties. The goals of the popular movements, in this instance, should include the struggle for basic freedoms, the empowerment of communities and constituencies, and accountability of government.

Finally, Ihonvbere asserts, ***there is no alternative to genuine democratization.*** Democracy makes it possible for ideas and ideals to be debated and resolved without resort to violence. It also requires that political rules be definite and be made known to all actors. Where ideas, interests, and opportunities are

suppressed, they go underground and express themselves in extra-legal and violent forms. Even oppressed segments of society might use religious fanaticism as an excuse to attack institutions perceived as bases of oppression and exploitation. As the economic crisis deepens, political interests might also manipulate public frustration to spread violence. This becomes even more dangerous when there are marginalized or alienated elites who can take advantage of such dispossession and oppression to advance narrow and political goals.

Ihonvbere argues that popular groups must intensify the struggle to put a permanent stop to military intervention in politics, and work for the eradication of those institutions and practices which have stifled civil society and repressed mass organizations for decades. While procedural democracy will open up the political terrain for deeper and more embracing politics, only genuine, systematic political empowerment of the citizenry would check religious manipulation and violence, Ihonvbere says. Only democracy can guarantee freedom of worship, the coexistence of different faiths, and the protection of their adherents, and significantly reduce political opportunists' ability to manipulate religion.

ACHIEVING DEMOCRATIC CONTROL OVER THE MILITARY

Robin Luckham of the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex has undertaken a series of USIP-supported case studies of democratization of Africa's repressive yet fragile state structures. Luckham has focused on an especially crucial aspect of that democratization—how to assure democratic control over Africa's military and security establishments. Democratic control of the military has a direct bearing on how, and by whom, conflicts are managed, and with what prospects of success.

The transitions to democracy that swept across Africa in the late 1980s and early 1990s were driven by a complex interplay of external and internal determinants. Above all, Luckham asserts, they were the product of state failure, of the incapacity of authoritarian (often military) regimes to provide the benefits of development, or indeed basic physical security, to the mass of their citizens. The legacy of state failure was distinctly double-edged. On the one hand it reduced the capacity of incumbent regimes to resist emergent pressures to democratize, as in Mali, Benin, or Tanzania. On the other, it unleashed conflicts that could threaten the existence of the state itself, as in Somalia, Liberia, Uganda (pre-1986), or Ethiopia (pre-1991). Africa's new democracies have thus had not only to rebuild democracy, but at the same time the state, together with the military and security bureaucracies which assure the state's monopoly of legitimate force.

A number of lessons can be learned from the failures of earlier "transitions to democracy" in countries like Ghana, Nigeria, and Sudan between the 1960s and the early 1980s. Most of these transitions were agreed to and cooperatively managed by the military and the civilian elites. There was little serious attempt to transform narrowly-based political institutions or civil-military relations to increase their popular legitimacy and enhance their developmental capacity.

What has been different about a number of the current transitions is that they have arisen from popular rebellions against existing state and military authority; in some cases through military and/or urban insurrections bringing down existing regimes, as in Mali or Ghana; in others through protracted armed struggles defeating an authoritarian government, as in Uganda, Ethiopia, and Eritrea; or forcing it to negotiate, as in Namibia and South Africa. Democratization has thus been associated with broader transformations of the state and of military institutions. Parenthetically, this implies that conflict is not always something to be "resolved" or avoided. More analysis is required to understand the conditions in which it facilitates struggles for democracy and social justice, as well as those in which it does not.

These transitions have been distinctive as well, in that they have been tempered by greater realism regarding the goals and limits of transformation than was the case with armed struggles during the immediate post-colonial era. For the most part popular participation has been reinstitutionalized within the frame of liberal multi-party democracy; market-oriented economic restructuring has taken precedence over efforts to achieve socioeconomic justice; and dissident troops or guerrilla forces have been restructured as professional armies.

The transfer of power to a democratically elected government is only the first chapter of a long and complicated story: Ensuring that military and security establishments continue afterwards to accept democratic control is just as important. Broadly speaking, says Luckham, the African experience reinforces researcher Alfred Stepan's contention—based on studies of civilian-military relations in democratizing Latin America—that not only should the civilian executive

be enabled to exercise firm political and military authority over the armed forces, but institutions in political and civil society also need to be empowered so as to be able to hold both the executive and military to account.[1] Yet South Africa is so far the only country in which such a broad process of empowerment seems to have been occurring, above all through its extremely active parliamentary committees on defense and security. Other countries such as Ghana and Mali have established such committees, but they have been less vocal and less well-supported by the press, civil society organizations, and research bodies capable of contributing to informed public debate of defense and security issues.

The constitution-making exercises in a number of the countries studied have given rise to interesting debates about whether the military is best controlled by excluding it from politics or by recognizing and institutionalizing its political role, for instance by giving it representation in the government and/or parliament (as in Uganda), or by formalizing procedures for consultation with the armed forces over defense and security policy as (in theory) in Ghana's Armed Forces and National Security Councils. Tanzania is a particularly interesting case in point. On the one hand the previous close relationship between the Tanzanian Peoples' Defense Force (TPDF) and the ruling *Chama cha Mapinduzi* (CCM) party facilitated the country's enviable record of civilian control and political stability. On the other, the advent of multi-party democracy after 1992 has necessitated the TPDF's disengagement from the CCM. Alternative means must now be found of assuring the military's loyalty to democratic institutions.

The institutional legacies of authoritarian governance and of the struggles against it have varied. In some countries, like Nigeria, over-powerful and politicized military and security establishments remain entrenched at the heart of the state. In others, like Mali, they have been fractured and weakened by internal revolts. In others they have been displaced by the guerrilla armies waging war against them. But in each case new democratic governments have of necessity had to restructure and reprofessionalize the armed forces. The issue has been how they can do so without rekindling military reaction and intervention. The dilemmas have been posed in an especially interesting way in countries like Uganda, Ethiopia, and Eritrea, where former guerrilla forces are being transformed into standing armies. Can they be professionalized while still retaining some of their democratic characteristics as "people's armies" acquired during their struggles against authoritarian rule?

Luckham points out that an essential aspect of military restructuring has been the reintegration and demobilization of the armed forces, welding members of previously conflicting armies or military factions into unified national forces and providing demobilized ex-combatants with livelihoods adequate to avert the danger of their drifting back to banditry and war. In countries like Uganda, Ethiopia, and South Africa, reintegration and demobilization have been essential not only for the termination of conflict, but for the restoration of functioning democratic institutions capable of exercising control over their armed forces.

Reintegration and demobilization are also connected to another issue faced by most African countries: how to assure the involvement in democratic institutions of all groups in a multi-ethnic state. Some of the new African democracies—Ethiopia, for example—have introduced plural or federal constitutional arrangements; others have continued to pursue national integration within the framework of a multi-ethnic state. In addition to such constitutional arrangements, most have adopted military recruitment policies aimed at making the armed forces more representative of the population as a whole. However, adjustments in recruitment are by themselves insufficient, Luckham points out. Military and security bureaucracies (and governments) have to learn to handle conflicts involving ethnic and other minorities with a modicum of restraint and understanding of minority aspirations. If they do not, they risk perpetuating conflicts, like the current rebellion in northern Uganda, that may wear away at both the legitimacy of democratic institutions and their ability to hold the military in check.

CONTROLLING THE MILITARY IN GHANA

Eboe Hutchful of Wayne State University has used an Institute grant to assess how successful Ghana has been in achieving civil control over its military and security agencies in the process of its democratic transition. Before the current transition began in 1992, Ghana had suffered a succession of successful coups (in 1966, 1972, 1979, and 1981) and short-lived transitions to democratic rule (in 1969 and 1979). Historically, civil control over the military and (to a lesser extent) over police and intelligence agencies in Ghana has been weak or nonexistent. By "civil control" is meant the ability of civil rulers to set or determine the

defense and security doctrines, goals and structures; to monitor the performance of security and intelligence agencies to ensure their consistency with constitutional and national goals; and to exercise effective oversight of defense and security budgets.

As in many African countries, Ghanaian civil institutions such as the Ministry of Defense are poorly equipped to execute these roles. The reasons for this are both structural and historical, and include initial lack of interest by civilian governments in military issues and low institutional capacity and expertise on the part of the Defense Ministry (the Ministry has been staffed mainly by junior level civil servants and clerks, the majority of whom are female). The Ministry is made up of a civil wing and a military wing, with the former theoretically in control of the latter. In reality, however, the Ministry is the Armed Forces, under marginal ministerial control. While the functions of the Ministry were limited from the very beginning, since independence in 1957, over time even they were whittled down, with the military takeover of government resulting in further role contraction for the civilian staff and assumption by the military of direct control of budgeting, allocation, accounting, and procurement functions.

In its democratic form the efficiency of civil control depends on the authority and control of military commanders over the institution. However, in Ghana the command systems inherited at independence were weak and poorly institutionalized. The very concept of "professionalism" appeared problematic in this context. Post-colonial African governments adopted the former colonial military formations (which had in fact been already in process of dissolution) for essentially emblematic reasons, their being seen as an essential artifact of "modern statehood." These discarded military structures carried at best only the veneer of professionalism, lacking both the historical logic which propelled professionalism (interstate military competition and the industrialization of war), and the social origins required to bind them to the state and the ruling class. Their major (if sporadic) function was not external defense but internal security.

Hutchful points out that military usurpation of political power was to have corrosive consequences for the military itself and to contribute in a second and more intractable sense to the difficulty of restoring civil control and authority. Politicization of military institutions led to the disintegration of the military, the delegitimation of the command system, and the decline of military authority, with a consequent shift of power from the military hierarchy to subaltern strata. This decline was intensified by internal mismanagement of the armed forces and severe contraction in military budgets. The crises of civil and military authority fed off each other in a cumulative process of instability and decline that was to prove extremely damaging to the nation.

Ghana's security apparatus, Hutchful argues, has been riven since independence by rivalries and conflict, between internal cliques and factions, between the armed forces and police, between these institutions and the intelligence organs (the Military Intelligence and Special Branch) as well as between the intelligence agencies themselves, and between the security community as a whole and the political authorities. This vitiated their effectiveness and power. Again these cleavages are historical and structural in origin, outgrowths of unstable corporate hierarchies, lack of clear lines of authority and control, lack of a clear defense policy and security mandate, poor communication between government, security and intelligence agencies (as well as between command and subaltern levels within the armed forces and police), and differences between corporate and political cultures. Cumulatively, these have produced multi-dimensional conflicts which were expressed in, or contributed to, the persistent instability and militarization of Ghanaian politics.

Hutchful argues that it is, ironically, precisely the implosion of both civil and military authority that provides the essential key to understanding the relative success of the most recent democratic transition, in 1992. While earlier transitions had collapsed ignominiously within three years, the Rawlings regime appears not only to have survived but to have succeeded in bringing the military and security agencies under political control, subsequently initiating the first democratic transition in Ghana since the 1960s with a real possibility of consolidation.

Several factors explain this positive development. First, Rawlings was able to exploit the decomposition of the military system (in particular the split between the officer corps and the ranks which bedeviled the previous regime) as a window of opportunity to reorganize the institution from below, in turn neutralizing the officer corps and then the ranks who had furnished his support base. Second, Rawlings was able to create countervailing forces based (unlike previous attempts) in part within the regular military itself, including the Committees for the Defense of the

Revolution (CDRs), the Forces Reserve Battalion, and so on. The domestic security complex has been extensively reorganized and made much more effective and coherent. Third, unlike previous transitions where the extrication of the military from power was formally complete, this latest transition involves the constitutionalization of the existing military-backed regime.

Unlike previous regimes, Rawlings' government has (not surprisingly, given Rawlings' military background) demonstrated much greater familiarity with the political terrain in the armed forces. At the same time there is some evidence that the military has become more amenable to political control. Not only has Ghana avoided a successful military coup since December 31, 1981—the longest period of political stability in its post-independence history—military budgets have also been scaled back to levels lower than at any time since the early post-independence period. Finally, Rawlings, again unlike the previous regime, was able to articulate these (sometimes repressive) security measures in a populist discourse which presented his regime as a "developmental dictatorship" operating selflessly on behalf of the nation. Thus while the formal framework of civil-military relations in 1992 replicates that of earlier constitutions, the underlying policies have been quite different.

According to Hutchful, ***the case of Ghana suggests certain lessons*** regarding the restoration of civil control in democratic transitions in Africa. ***First, restoration of civil control in the context of democratic transitions may involve reconstructing not only civil but military authority and professionalism.*** In addition to redefining the military's relationship with the political process, the structures, role, mission and doctrine of the armed forces may need fundamental redefinition, to enhance both operational efficiency and democratic control. Even so, it is unlikely that constitutional constraints alone will be sufficient to keep the military in barracks in the short term. Some form of countervailing mechanism may be required pending the longer-term development of professional restraints.

Second, as Robin Luckham has insisted in another context, ***an understanding of the micropolitics of the military and security agencies is essential for unraveling the dynamics of democratic transitions.***[2] Analysis of the different power, interests, and roles of the agencies that comprise the security community must be nuanced. Ghana's experiences again suggest the importance in any political system of a clear security and defense mandate and reasonably unambiguous structures of regulation and control. In their absence, we see a mutually destructive failure of the main players in the security game—the government, the armed forces, the police and the intelligence agencies—to develop viable operational relationships and mechanisms of dispute resolution.

Third, civil control demands the development of a cadre of civilian defense and strategic analysts and planners. This is crucial but only the beginning. Political command of the armed forces in Africa has traditionally meant executive control. Responsibility for oversight must be shared more equitably with the legislature, the public, and the press if control is to be democratized. Stepan has rightly emphasized the need for legislative self-empowerment with regard to military issues and policies, through enhancement of the legislature's own research, information, and monitoring expertise, and so forth, and for the development of autonomous intelligence on military and defense issues by the organizations of civil society (including the media) as well as the need for civil society to conduct its own dialogue with the military.[3]

Finally, as the Rawlings experiment reminds us, ***civil (or political) control is an essential component of, but not necessarily to be confused with, democratic control.*** The structures and practices that have ensured the subordination of the military in the current Ghanaian transition have frequently embodied self-imposed restraint. Public accountability and parliamentary oversight remain weak. In addition to the factors discussed above, a second element of democratic control is the use of force in a manner in keeping with respect for legal and constitutional rights. This dimension also remains weak in Ghana. It is precisely the previous success of unorthodox policies that now inhibit the development of more professional and democratic forms of control, posing the possibility of a progression from "hard" to "soft" authoritarian controls which would rely on special security and intelligence units and manipulation of ethnic divisions rather than on real democratization.

TRAINING FOR PEACEMAKING

TRAINING WOMEN IN SOMALIA

Training in conflict resolution can make an important contribution to the management of conflict in Africa. The Institute of Peace has supported such training activities, particularly the "training of trainers," in Nigeria and South Africa, as well as for the staff of the OAU. But a training program for Somali women is particularly noteworthy.

With financial assistance from an Institute grant, the Centre for the Strategic Initiatives of Women (CSIW), led by Hibaaq Osman, initiated four community-based conflict management training workshops for Somali women during the first six months of 1996. The primary objectives of the workshops were to train women in conflict management techniques, to build their capacity for training other women, and to expand Somali women's participation in local and national peacebuilding. Workshop trainers, who developed extensive conflict management and training skills during a 1995 CSIW-sponsored "training of trainers" series held in South Africa and financed by USIP, served as workshop facilitators.

Each workshop was designed and implemented by a Somali grassroots women's organization, or coalition of women's organizations, in consultation with CSIW. The implementing organizations considered recommendations from local women's groups, women community leaders, and local authorities or elders in choosing twenty to thirty-five participants for each workshop. Most participants were members of established or nascent women's groups, and represented diverse communities and social groups. The five- to seven-day workshops addressed strategies for conflict management within the context of current clashes in Somalia and Somaliland (a northern province which has asserted its independence from the rest of Somalia), focusing on techniques of negotiating, mediating, implementing solutions, and developing personal leadership skills.

CSIW's previous training of fifteen Somali women enabled the organization to conduct cost-effective training with local facilitators at Somali sites. Participants were clearly delighted to be working with women facilitators who shared many of their experiences and concerns. Bonding among women from the same locality was rapid and efficacious.

The most frequently identified obstacles to peacemaking included lack of knowledge among a broad cross-section of Somali women that they can effectively participate in conflict management; lack of communication among women from diverse backgrounds, localities, and districts about their peacebuilding strategies and resources; and violent clashes in some areas, preventing women from approaching combatants to initiate negotiations.

Because participants and facilitators in each workshop represented diverse backgrounds, they had an opportunity to explore their own prejudices in role-playing and simulation exercises. Heated exchanges occurred, followed by analysis of the need to put aside bias and to assume an impartial position for effective conflict management. Many participants were surprised at the ease with which they could recognize and overcome their prejudices to forge agreements with other participants.

Immediately following the workshops, many women used their newly developed skills, demonstrating a strong desire to become proactive mediators. Several workshop participants successfully negotiated the release of a Swedish woman who had been kidnapped by a clan gang. Women from the Merca workshop placed themselves physically between clashing clan members and effectively stopped the fighting. Participants from the Save Somali Women and Children group held a "peace feast" for women from both sides of Mogadishu's "Green Line"—the divide between warring clans—after they effectively negotiated an end to fighting between two clans.

Participants in most workshops began intensive networking well before their training ended. The

advantages of sharing ideas and resources and of women's coalition-building soon became clear even to those who were initially reluctant to merge agendas with other women. They were offered the model of the influential Coalition of Grassroots Women's Organizations in Somalia, founded in 1995 following a CSIW training project in Nairobi. Women from Mogadishu reported that they now cross the Green Line at night to discuss peace initiatives with each other. Other women are striving to expand their local networks into national coalitions. These examples suggest a vast potential for linking grassroots women's groups across Somalia and Somaliland to create strong, committed peace networks.

Many participants have successfully assumed influential local peacebuilding roles, despite gender prejudices, and have gained new respect in their communities by effectively mediating conflicts instigated among men. Women have also induced local authorities and elders to begin their own negotiation processes and served as trusted "shuttle" diplomats among opposing clan leaders. At the same time, according to numerous participants, they have achieved a viable balance between their traditional domestic roles and their expanded peacebuilding roles. They expressed great satisfaction in simultaneously maintaining both roles, sometimes viewing their domestic responsibilities as enhancing their public peacemaking credibility.

A significant result of the women's conflict management workshops is expanded political interest among participants. In exploring both causes and solutions to conflicts, they often found themselves confronting essentially political dilemmas. Women in all workshops recognized that their lack of political power excluded them in many situations from preventing or managing conflicts. Even women with no immediate interest in assuming political roles expressed their intention to build coalitions between women's peace groups and local political authorities.

Virtually all workshop participants expressed their determination to transmit their new conflict management knowledge to other women and women's groups by organizing local training sessions. Significant numbers of participants have also taken their training skills outside women's groups—a trainee from Mogadishu gathered twenty boys, who have weapons and frequently use them, into a training class in north Mogadishu. Several of these boys have changed their orientation and life goals and gotten rid of their weapons. Another group of trainees conducts weekly conflict management workshops in a camp near Mogadishu for internally displaced Somalis.

Three overarching lessons can be drawn from this training program. First, women can play important peacemaking roles even in societies where they have traditionally been excluded from most political authority and responsibility. This is particularly true when the population blames the men for the prolonged conflicts plaguing their society. Second, training in negotiation techniques, conflict management, and peacemaking can enhance the capabilities and confidence of potential local peacemakers. Third, other African countries can benefit from the experience South Africans have gained both in resolving conflicts and in training peacemakers. The training these Somali women obtained in South Africa enabled them, upon their return to Somalia, to share their newly acquired skills with other Somali women.

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Building on Locally-Based and Traditional Peace Processes

It is tempting to seek innovative approaches to conflict management in Africa on the assumption that the failure of more traditional methods is in large part responsible for ongoing conflict. But three projects funded by the United States Institute of Peace demonstrate that more traditional methods may not have outlived their utility, especially when adapted to modern realities. In addition, analysts' emphasis on regional and national conflict often obscures the fact that many African conflicts are more localized, and that local conflict management is an essential ingredient in addressing Africa's civil wars.

THE HORN OF AFRICA

Based on his USIP-financed research on local conflict management in countries of the Horn—particularly Sudan, Somalia, and Ethiopia—John Prendergast of the Center of Concern and the University of Maryland concludes that local conflict in the Horn is growing increasingly intense and violent as arms become more plentiful and state authority structures slowly erode. In response, there is growing interest in local conflict management and resolution processes, particularly those that draw on traditional approaches of intercommunal reconciliation.

Prendergast asserts that local dynamics of violence must not be forgotten, even in the context of serious regional crises and national conflicts. For elders and chiefs, for local commanders of government and rebel armies, and for local militias, local conflict in the Horn often takes precedence over national conflict. Opportunities for asset-stripping and revenge often dictate local relationships, and local warlordism can be a problem. The consequences of local conflict are often more destructive and deadly for civilian populations that those of national-level conflicts. While subnational conflicts usually have some kind of tie to higher-order national wars, they often have lives and logical frameworks of their own, for which national-level peace efforts are irrelevant.

Local conflicts are frequently organized along ethnic or lineage lines, and leaders organize around themes of group vulnerability and demonization of the "other." Given the precarious survival contexts in which many Horn populations find themselves, the ease with which fear and insecurity may be manipulated is not surprising. When specific incidents—attacks, asset raids, rapes—do occur, they often escalate, producing grievances which live on sometimes for generations.

Prendergast explains that there are layers of causality to local conflicts in the Horn, ranging from the legacy of the divide-and-rule policies of colonial and post-colonial regimes and rebel groups; to what he calls the pathological modernization pursued by and urged for many African states, which deepened inequalities and further warped national and local economies away from rational production and consumption patterns. Other causes have included manipulation of ethnic rivalry as an easy vehicle for social mobilization and for political and economic gain, and demographic trends and shifts resulting from the violent accumulation of such assets as valuable land. This is producing a historic realignment of population and political power, fueled by a hyper-exploitative quest for resource consolidation.

Less and less manpower and community support is required to successfully wage war in the Horn. A small number of disaffected or opportunistic people can acquire sophisticated weaponry and, if backed by a few businessmen, elders, or politicians, can create serious instability.

There are numerous initiatives attempting to address local conflict in the Horn. The focus of Prendergast's research has been on traditional processes, mechanisms, and methods used by local communities to reduce and manage—and sometimes resolve—

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conflicts at the sub-national level. These range from councils of elders or chiefs (for example, the *shir* or traditional assemblies in Somalia which use elders as negotiators in close proximity to the location of the conflict), local courts, kinship mechanisms, compensatory processes, and healing ceremonies.

There are many types of initiatives which might be used at any given time to address local conflict. Some are initiated locally, some at the national level. They include such diverse undertakings as attempts to broker peace by local NGOs and associations, such as the New Sudan Council of Churches in southern Sudan; support for peace-building programming by such international NGOs as Search for Common Ground and International Alert, which provide conflict management training, or other international organizations engaging in mediation, such as the conference USIP helped organize to bring together southern Sudanese factions. In other instances, relief and development agencies have changed their programs to incorporate peace-building objectives, like the peace education initiatives of UNICEF, and national-level peace processes have attempted to address local conflict dynamics, such as the UN efforts to broker peace in subregions of Somalia during the intervention. Efforts have been made to build, strengthen, or expand justice systems at the district or municipal levels, whether state-controlled or traditional, as in the rebuilding of the system in Ethiopia. Local military leaders have negotiated cessation of local hostilities, for example to bring about the Lafon Declaration in 1995 in southern Sudan. There have been national government policies devolving or decentralizing decision-making authority to local levels, particularly in the Ethiopian federal experiment, and national governments redrawing boundaries to enhance ethnic homogeneity, such as in the redivision of Ethiopia's regions.

Other attempts to mitigate or resolve local conflicts have involved businessmen in initiating or supporting conflict management processes to enhance trade and other wealth-building opportunities, exemplified by a myriad of examples from Somalia. Local elections in Somalia have been designed to increase stakeholder participation. The Swedish Life and Peace Institute sponsored an October 1992 meeting to offer peacebuilding and problem-solving workshops and skillbuilding. Local conflicts have been contained through greater support of civil institutions in the context of state erosion or collapse, or the achievement of self-determination, as in the case of Eritrea.

External efforts at peacemaking, observes Prendergast, are often thwarted for a number of reasons, including the erosion of the authority of traditional leaders and politicians, thus creating major difficulties in negotiating with legitimate community representatives who are able to implement agreements; the use of peace processes by negotiators and warring parties to build their own reputations or fame; the internal logic of conflict, in which asset-stripping, predation, insecurity, and continued mobilization reinforce the authority of war leaders; and the gulf between national processes and local implementation. These and other factors greatly hinder conflict management, particularly the initiatives of outsiders whose interests usually do not coincide with those of local war leaders.

In contrast, locally initiated conflict management and resolution processes often involve significant segments of local authority structures, and often signify community desires for stability, enhanced production, increased trade and other benefits which war often denies to civilians resident in a war zone. For conflict prevention and resolution processes to take hold, Prendergast asserts, requires the participation of all segments of society. Traditional authorities (elders and chiefs), women's organizations, local institutions, and professional associations have critical roles to play in the development of grassroots peacebuilding.

Some of the recent locally-initiated peace conferences and agreements which Prendergast has studied in Sudan include grassroots peace conferences in eastern and western Torit District which involved the Catholic church and community leaders; the intra-Nuer peace conference described in the next section, which involved the Presbyterian church and Nuer chiefs; and the Dinka-Misseriya peace agreements in the transitional zone between north and south which have generally held since 1989, but are under extreme threat recently.

Local dispute resolution processes in Somalia have included the peace and governance-building conference held between February and June 1995 among the Rahanweyne in the Bay and Bakool Regions, which helped tamp down intra-Rahanweyne violence, but was not successful in its objective of deterring attacks by neighboring clan militias from Mogadishu, Gedo region, or the central regions. A series of peace

conferences in Absame areas in the Juba Valley have reduced intra-Absame conflict and aim to galvanize a movement toward peace with neighboring Majerteen in Kismayu and Marehan in Gedo region. Peace conferences sponsored by elders in Somaliland include the Erigavo peace conference which has kept the peace in Sanaag despite major external pressures, and the Boraama Peace Conference which maintained the peace in volatile Somaliland for nearly two years.

Finally, a significant peace conference was held in eastern Ethiopia. The Qabri Dahar conference in Region Five (the Ogaden), brought together a significant cross-section of the political and traditional leadership of the Ogaden, stopped the planting of landmines, reduced tensions between the army and local population, drew many of the Ogadeni National Liberation Front fighters out of the bush, increased commerce, and temporarily brought some consensus about the future of the region.

In the Horn, where vast areas are ungoverned in the conventional sense, it is evident that local political organizing is alive and well. Formal processes involve basic questions about the distribution and limits of power, checks and balances, conflict resolution, etc. And where men have previously dominated the discussion, women are becoming important agents of conflict management in some locations. Internal schisms erupt regularly, often violently, but one or another kind of peace initiative almost always emerges in response.

A CASE FROM SOUTHERN SUDAN

Wal Duany of the University of Indiana is analyzing a conflict which occurred in southern Sudan in 1993, based upon his role as participant observer in the subsequent peace process. The conflict occurred between the Lou Nuer and the Jikany Nuer, who fought each other as they competed for grazing lands, water, and access to fishing pools. It is probably the most destructive internal conflict in the history of the Nuer people: approximately 1,300 people were killed, 75,000 cattle raided, and as many as 150,000 people displaced by the fighting.

This intra-ethnic conflict must be viewed within the context of a larger conflict between two rebel movements, the Sudan Peoples Liberation Movement/Sudan Peoples Liberation Army (SPLM/A) and the SPLM/A-United, currently known as the South Sudan Independence Movement/South Sudan Independence Army (SSIM/A). The conflict among the Nuer was contained within a geographical area under the control of the SPLM/A-United. The larger context was the civil war between the rebel movements and the government of Sudan, which has been fought over thirty of the last forty years.

In July 1993 the leadership of the Presbyterian Church of the Sudan and local chiefs made efforts to resolve this conflict among the Nuer but failed. SPLM/A-United also mounted a major intervention. A peace conference was then called to seek resolution. The conference was initiated and implemented by the indigenous peoples with relatively little assistance from external parties, and held in Akobo during August and September, 1994. It involved the active participation of hundreds of persons representing each of the two clans in conflict. The conference succeeded in reaching agreement.

Duany has drawn several lessons from his study of the Akobo Peace Conference that may have wider applicability in Africa.

Particularly in a conflict over grazing, water, and fishing rights, ***the environmental conditions underlying the dispute must be fully explored and understood*** if the basis for peace is to be identified.

Serious account must be taken of the philosophical and religious ideas that lie behind the disputants' understanding of the world, how they think of themselves, and how they relate to one another and to outsiders. This means that third-party participants in the mediation process must either be knowledgeable about the cosmologies and theologies or be thoroughly briefed by those who are. For example, the Nuer system of order is based upon a covenantal theology that in turn informs the structure of civic bodies. The fundamental guiding principle expected to govern behavior is "to do unto others as you would have others do unto you."

Methods of conflict resolution should be drawn from the traditional culture with the guidance of traditional leaders. This includes communication styles, leadership choices, methods of negotiation, participation of parties to the conflict and the third-party, decision-making structures, the system of recompense for wrongdoing, determination of wrongdoing and appropriate punishment, processes for remorse, confession, forgiveness, and reconciliation, and rituals for marking closure and new beginnings.

The underlying structure of social institutions and the principles guiding interaction must be understood. These are particularly important in relation to the rules and relationships that govern property

rights, marriage and the role of women, and kinship ties as resources for settling disputes.

Peace resolutions must address not only root causes of the conflict but make provision for institutional arrangements that can successfully implement agreements. This can be aided by cultural revitalization of traditional systems of order, justice, and welfare.

Understanding the system of governance and leadership is critically important. Among the Nuer, leaders are drawn from and are responsible to the people, although ultimately all are responsible to God. The key leadership systems from the parties in conflict must be a part of the conflict resolution process. In this case, that included the elders, custodians, age-set leaders, women leaders, civil administrators, rebel military personnel, indigenous militia, Christian church leaders, and traditional religious leaders.

Much of the internal political history of the Nuer revolves around the balance of power among those who are seen as representatives of God's will and those whose authority stems from the people. This fundamental division of powers is crucial and is reflected in modern Nuer society in the deference shown in conflict resolution processes to those recognized as representatives of religious bodies. Those vested with significant moral authority must be at the heart of the process. In this case that included the traditional custodians, leaders of the Christian churches, the women leaders, elders, age-set leaders, and traditional religious leaders.

Understanding of traditional conflict management processes is essential. In the case of the Nuer such processes include the convocation of assemblies of people, councils of elders, aggregation of age-sets, religious associations, and functional organizations of citizens.

The peace process must be seen as a long-term process of cultural and human interaction between traditions and modernity, not as a quick fix for a particular conflict.

The involvement of international organizations or governmental agencies needs to be kept to a minimum and strategically employed to address specific gaps in the process and not as a substitute for indigenous leadership. In this case external parties usefully provided food and other relief assistance for the participants, some assistance with transportation, and some funding for conference supplies, as well as travel for international participants and for documentation of the process.

THE ROLES OF CHIEFS AND THE CHURCH IN GHANA

Professor Maxwell Owusu of the University of Michigan has been undertaking an Institute-assisted study of the role of chiefs and the church in conflict management in Ghana. Since the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, if not long before, with the growth of towns, the expansion of Christianity, and the establishment of colonial rule, Ghanaian society has witnessed the spontaneous and continuous growth of hundreds of voluntary associations in rural and urban areas, many of them with membership that cuts across ethnic, religious, and occupational lines. Two surveys of Accra (in 1953–1956) and Sekondi-Takoradi (in 1948) shortly before independence attest to the proliferation and growing importance of voluntary organizations with both modern and traditional roots in Ghana and to the vibrancy of the evolving civil society. Most of the sixty-seven mutual benefit societies with Christian-inspired names like "Perfect Peace Society" and "Society of God" were more than thirty years old at the time of the Accra survey in the early 1950s. The Christian Council of Ghana was established in 1929, the Catholic Bishops' Conference in 1950, and the most recent, the Ghana Pentecostal Council, in 1969. Many of the early voluntary associations and their members were mobilized for the struggles leading to Ghana's independence in 1957.

The Christian Council of Ghana is a fellowship of over a dozen non-Pentecostal Christian denominations in Ghana, representing a large majority of the 62 percent of Ghana's population which is Christian. Its role is advisory and it acts through consultation and cooperation among its constituent church members. The Catholic Bishops' Conference meets annually to discuss urgent matters facing both the church and the nation, and declares the church's position on these issues. The Ghana Pentecostal Council represents the fastest growing Christian churches, over seventy-eight different sects in Ghana today. The leadership of these three Christian bodies are among the most respected and influential persons in Ghanaian society.

Before the Proclamation of 1874, which established the British Crown as the central authority in Ghana (then the Gold Coast), the supreme executive, legislative, military, and judicial power for the maintenance of law and order, peace, and justice was vested in the natural rulers—kings, chiefs, and elders. The chiefs' statutory functions today include membership and participation in judicial and other capacities in regional

and national houses of chiefs whose existence is the result of constitutional provision and statutory enactments. Importantly, under customary law, a chief is "father" of the state, the leader of his people. Among other things, the chief is duty-bound to promote peace, order, and good-neighborliness in his domain; to settle disputes extra-judicially; and to promote reconciliation between his subjects, providing a social framework for the management or settlement of a broad spectrum of interpersonal and communal disputes. Ghana's 1992 Constitution recognizes this "fatherly" conflict management role of chiefs, and provides for their non-partisan, active involvement in national affairs. There are over 32,000 recognized chiefs providing local leadership in every hamlet, village, town, and city throughout Ghana. Chieftaincy and the Christian church, along with their various organizations, are the two oldest, most enduring, ubiquitous, representative, influential, and truly national institutions. Their leadership is naturally crucial for peace, order, stability, and Ghana's overall development.

Official state publications describe Ghana as a Christian country even though there exist significant and influential minorities of non-Christians—Muslims and votaries of traditional religions. The national ethos justifies this self-image of Ghana as a Christian—or more correctly, as a deeply religious—country, passionately protective of her good name. The Ghanaian ethos, with roots deep in ancestral traditions and Christianity, disapproves of any form of avoidable conflict or disorder in society, and considers the deliberate provocation of conditions that stir up conflict and threaten peace immoral, evil, or sinful.

Accordingly, there is a long history of church or missionary intervention for peace and order in serious political and social crises in Ghana. Christian quarters, churches, and homes of clergy have long been regarded as places of refuge, sanctuary, and peace for individuals persecuted by society or victims of inhumane customary practices. Chiefs' palaces and local shrines have served similar functions.

As early as the 1850s African church leaders in Ghana maintained a policy of not taking sides in disputes between British colonial officials and local chiefs and people, remaining as neutral as possible and ready to take the role of peacemakers and honest brokers, mediating to bring about reconciliation between warring factions, and between government and sections of the national populations. There are numerous examples in both colonial and post-colonial Ghana where the timely intervention of church leaders reduced the escalation of political conflicts by delaying the implementation of controversial policies, allowing tempers to cool and time to reconsider positions and move toward compromise. The peacemaking motives of Christian leaders were based on a conviction that the maintenance of law and order was essential for the spread of Christianity, the promotion of socio-economic development, and spiritual and material well-being.

Clearly, according to Owusu, Ghanaian respect for the establishment and preservation of peace, order, and justice is based on theological, moral, and cultural values. This foundation supports the pattern of controlling norms for the constitutional and social organization of the country and a pervasive respect for orderly and harmonious existence rooted in the sanctity of ancestral family traditions, chieftaincy, and Christianity. Thus, disruptive chieftaincy disputes that threaten personal safety, security, peace, and order are grave matters of wide concern.

Church leaders and chiefs speak out clearly against repressive and unjust laws and warn government and the general public against actions that do not promote unity, reconciliation, and harmony, but create rancor, resentment, and bitterness. The Ghanaian public expects, indeed demands, the exertion of the beneficial moral influence of the church and chieftaincy on state policies and actions. In the 1950s, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Ghana intervened and mediated the bitter, violent struggles between factions of the Convention People's Party and the National Liberation Movement in Kumasi, and helped to bring about a more peaceful transition to independence. In the 1990s the churches and chiefs again acted as mediators in the protracted conflict between the government and opposition groups.

It demonstrates the enormous moral authority and influence exercised by the church in Ghana that on May 17, 1992 the chairman of the ruling Provisional National Defense Council used a church service platform to apologize to the whole nation and especially to the families who in one way or another had been wronged by government action and policies, a courageous and important symbolic act in Ghana's transition to democracy, which was well-received. The churches also organized national prayers to ensure a violence-free and peaceful democratic transition.

Owusu's principal conclusion is that the church and chieftaincy in Ghana have contributed to the

evolution of a national culture favoring a national self-image and vision that embodies a healthy paradox—it fosters both a mild form of nationalism based on humane values and the acceptance of the best that indigenous as well as foreign cultures have to offer. Ghanaian patriotism has nurtured a national moral consciousness that encourages inter-ethnic, inter-religious, and inter-regional harmony by cultivating every significant primordial, personal, sacred, and civil tie. In the Ghanaian popular view, a good Fante, Ewe, Kokomba, or Asante, or a good Muslim or Christian, cannot be a bad Ghanaian—the virtues are reciprocal. Indeed, Owusu concludes that Ghanaians have been remarkably successful due to enduring traditions which build Ghanaian patriotism on the strong framework of local, regional, communal, ethnic, and sectarian ties and affinities.

THE FORMATION OF DISTRICT COUNCILS IN SOMALIA

With strong encouragement from the UN starting in 1992, the Life and Peace Institute (LPI) of Sweden has been supporting local initiatives for peace and reconciliation in Somalia, the largest component of which is support for rebuilding local district and regional administrative structures. The organization of these councils was authorized by the 1993 Addis Ababa Agreement between Somalia's various rival factions. LPI's training program for members of district councils is the only NGO program which has operated on a country-wide scale in Somalia in recent years. With grant support from the Institute of Peace, LPI commissioned a German anthropologist, Wolfgang Heinrich, to undertake an evaluation of the effectiveness of its approach to conflict management.

Heinrich's study concluded that the councils have generally not turned out to be effective mechanisms for local conflict management, though in some cases they provide an effective institutional framework for the management of everyday life at district level. In general, traditional clan authorities, using traditional methods of negotiation, continue to bear primary responsibility for handling local conflicts, with the new councils playing an important supportive role.

Several factors account for the councils' limited effectiveness. First, they were too hastily organized by the UN. Communities were given insufficient time to agree on the basic principles for clan relations within the new district structures. The UN also too rigidly imposed the formula for council structure and membership, including the provision that each must have twenty-one members. And the councils were not effectively linked to traditional clan structures and were sometimes seen as rival organizations. Relationships between the councils and such traditional authorities as chiefs, religious leaders, and elders were not defined prior to the establishment of the councils, and remained confusing after their creation.

In Somaliland, the peace process was inspired and driven by traditional leaders and resulted in the establishment of local peace accords within an informal political structure. This included the formation of an overarching assembly of elders which has played an active and recognized role as mediator throughout the region. While Heinrich concludes that the much more successful process in Somaliland evolved with almost no outside intervention, the process in Somalia was heavily influenced by external forces, many of whom did not fully understand Somali society and social structure.

The councils were expected to collect local taxes, but when district residents recognized that the councils could not deliver services, they generally stopped paying taxes. In addition, most local NGOs failed to coordinate activities with the appropriate district councils, thereby undermining the councils' legitimacy. Difficult relations also existed between the councils and local police forces.

Despite these shortcomings, the fact that the councils have continued to function in most parts of Somalia with only very limited UN support is an indication that the councils are perceived as useful by the local communities. Where councils have attained some level of legitimacy it usually results from a mutually supportive relationship having been worked out between the council and the traditional clan authority structures. Heinrich anticipates that when national political structures are once again established in Somalia, the district councils should receive additional resources, and they will enjoy enhanced legitimacy and authority as intermediate structures which can mediate between local communities and the national government.

HUMANITARIAN AID AND CONFLICT PREVENTION

LESSONS FROM THE GREATER HORN

In most complex political emergencies, humanitarian aid is by far the most important arena of grassroots interaction between the international community and the conflicting parties. Emergency assistance can fuel conflict and dramatically influence its dynamics.[4] Ignoring the wider impact and potential of humanitarian aid removes one of the most important policy instruments for preventing the escalation of conflict and for promoting long-term peace-building.

With assistance from an Institute of Peace grant, John Prendergast of the Center of Concern has researched these issues and developed a conceptual framework for preventing conflict escalation and building peace with humanitarian assistance. Its four key elements are integrating humanitarian principles more fully into the emergency response regime; applying lessons from the field that can help prevent the exacerbation of conflict by humanitarian aid; developing conflict prevention and peace-building elements which can be incorporated into humanitarian aid strategies; and pursuing humanitarian aid conditionalities linked to conflict prevention, mitigation, and resolution.

According to Prendergast's analysis, those who plan to provide humanitarian aid in crisis situations must

Seek deeper analysis in the planning process, and diversify information sources. Donors and humanitarian organizations must ask how aid affects economic and military strategies and balance. They must take account of the risk that unequal inputs given to opposing sides will intensify tensions. Proper timing of intervention is key; e.g., it is counterproductive to provide food aid during harvests. Planning for community participation should be a major factor in building internal accountability. The chain of inconsistent accountability begins with poor planning, and war economies are reinforced as a result. Agencies need appropriate education on the local context, through knowledgeable personnel, literature, and other resources. This helps reduce mistakes which fuel conflict.

Conduct appropriate and independent assessments of need. Improper assessments leading to inflated population figures or a misunderstanding of the local food economy usually result in an environment where diversion of aid is easy. Assessments must answer the question of why people are vulnerable. Agencies must talk to widely diverse people and organizations during assessments, at a variety of times, in order to get a clearer picture of the situation. Assessors must strive to meet minority groups and women, and demand independence to the maximum extent possible. Assessors need to ask not only what a community needs, but what it is already doing and build on that.

Study options for modes of access. The right choice between the various methods of negotiating and ensuring access can help lessen the likelihood that aid will exacerbate conflict. Among the options are negotiated access, cross-border operations, military protection, or commercial channels.

Be astute and flexible in the types of aid provided. Certain kinds of assistance are more "lootable" than others. A food's market value, for example, can play a major role in whether it draws the interest of military forces and looters. An important rationale for increasing the ratio of non-food to food inputs is the lack of military utility of most non-food rehabilitative aid. The responses of outside actors should be guided by what already works at the local level, what structures are in place and supported by the community, and what the indigenous social welfare mechanisms and kinship exchange dynamics are.

Study effects of targeting and distribution methods. Agencies must attempt to understand local patterns of political and social marginalization to develop appropriate targeting and distribution methods. There are usually great differences in suffering along class and identity lines. Navigating along these fault lines is

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critical in minimizing the strengthening of warring parties. Flawed distribution systems facilitate diversion. Getting aid directly into the hands of families—especially women heads of households—denies military authorities an opportunity for easy diversion.

At the local level, women should be involved in the planning process and identification of beneficiaries to the maximum extent possible. Where the opportunity exists, alternatives to armed factions should be cultivated and supported through distribution mechanisms which give priority to women's groups, technical committees (water, health, food, etc.), and traditional leaders where appropriate.

Commit to independent monitoring and evaluation. A commitment to independent monitoring and a willingness to conduct continuous program evaluation are key elements in reducing aid's contribution to conflict. The more sophisticated warring parties become in manipulating aid for their ends, the more critical is frequent evaluation of the effects of agencies' humanitarian interventions.

Prioritize engagement and capacity-building. Capacity-building in divided or collapsed states can support grassroots governance, a tool of preventive diplomacy. Providing training and other support can enhance the professionalism of local authorities, which in turn may increase local populations' stake in them, enhancing local stability. In the context of emergency programming, there are many opportunities to support indigenous non-governmental forms of social organization. In every society, there are traditional mechanisms of kinship and self-help which are often the primary contributors to a community's survival in a complex emergency.

Integrate human rights monitoring, advocacy, and capacity-building objectives. More attention should focus on building indigenous capacity to deal with human rights abuses in a society. Early warning of famine must systematically incorporate the human rights surveillance which it now parallels, in order to detect such human rights violations as forcible resettlement, attacks on markets, and resource thefts that are as crucial as weather monitoring in predicting famine. The mandates of most operational agencies prevent them from speaking out aggressively on human rights issues, but many can provide key information to human rights monitoring groups. There should be greater coordination between those that can speak out publicly and those that cannot.

In most internal conflicts and complex emergencies, humanitarian agencies respond to the casualties and such manifestations of war as refugee flows, with very little investment in peacemaking and preventing the expansion of the war. Donors and operating agencies can move beyond treating the symptoms of crises and use aid to mitigate conflict and address the economic disruptions at the root of the emergencies. If employed more strategically, aid might be able to contribute to longer-term processes of peacebuilding.

Aid has great potential for addressing some of the factors which ignite tensions, according to Prendergast's report. Some promising possibilities include

Creating intercommunal or cross-line aid committees. In areas where communities or contesting militia groups have frequently clashed and created emergency needs, priority should be given to the creation or support of intercommunal mechanisms to discuss emergency needs. Strengthening cross-line communication may have no impact on the warleaders, but perhaps will lead the peace-seeking elements of neighboring communities to see mutual interests in cooperation. With communication and cooperation partially restored, neighbors can continue to trade, graze animals, and maintain other ties even while warleaders continue to fight.

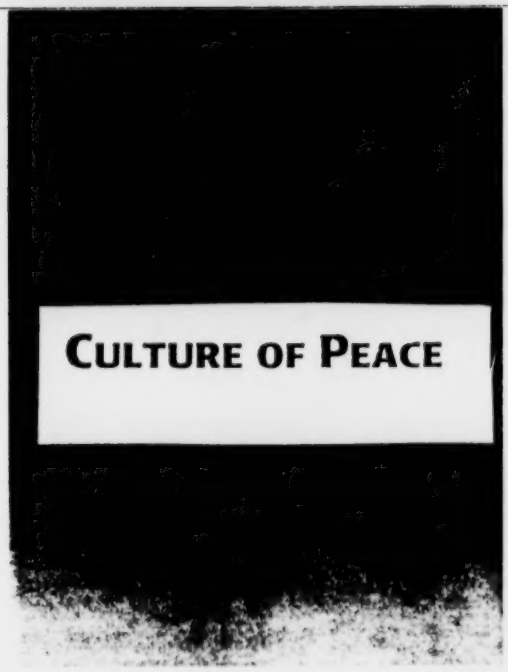
Promotion of intercommunal trade and exchange. Trade and exchange mechanisms are often the most important means through which communities can survive times of conflict-induced scarcity. Economic exchange between communities keeps lines of communication open. This is critical for addressing misperceptions about the intentions of neighboring communities. Operating agencies can encourage and support these exchanges.

Addressing the economic roots of conflict. Conflicts which have their roots in competition over resources are obvious candidates for interventions which seek to resolve the underlying resource-driven tensions. Using aid in a manner which reduces local violence can ultimately produce greater gains than the direct benefits derived from the distribution of commodities. Local recruitment of militias is often fed by failed development and limited economic opportunities. Investment in those regions might draw back some of these militia to civilian life in their home areas. The greater the potential for trade, the more vested interest will develop in efforts to create stability and reduce violence.

Planning for peacebuilding. Some agencies are already bringing conflict resolution specialists into planning and evaluation processes to advise on how the agencies can contribute to peace. Agencies can re-

main open to responding in ways that will support local reconciliation, including local peace conferences.

Encouraging indigenous peace-building capacity. Emergency interventions can support local peacemakers by virtue of who the agencies adopt as local partners. The most important means to promote sustainable reconciliation is to build a peace constituency. Aid organizations should be particularly sensitized to the emergence of women's groups which challenge conflict and promote peace and human rights.



MOZAMBIQUE AND ANGOLA

Most of the cases described here involve external intervention and focus on specific mechanisms to make and build peace. But in some settings intervention and peacebuilding mechanisms are less important in promoting peace than are broad cultural patterns. A mutually-reinforcing configuration of beliefs, patterns, and practices may come to pervade a society which promotes and reinforces peace.

With grant support from the Institute, Carolyn Nordstrom of the University of California at Berkeley has discovered what she terms a "culture of peace," reinforcing progress toward peace and reconciliation in Mozambique, and concludes that other war-torn countries can generate a similar kind of culture. Nordstrom reports that in the years she worked in Mozambique, from 1988 to 1996, she carefully documented the development of a popular culture concerned with conflict resolution and peacebuilding. She concluded that she could show how this culture was developed and transmitted countrywide—across the many cultural and language groups, across gender and class groups, throughout Mozambique. Virtually every locale had an informal group that made sure any arrival who had been exposed to violence was seen by a health care practitioner for physical ailments, treated by a counselor for emotional problems, taught how to resume peacetime existence, and helped by the general community to reestablish a productive lifestyle and be reintegrated into the community. These structures were so widespread that every town and refugee camp Nordstrom visited in eight different provinces of Mozambique offered these or similar conflict resolution and resources, "to take the war out" of people who had been affected by it.

The remarkable thing about these Mozambican peacebuilding processes, Nordstrom reports, was that they were spontaneous and indigenous, not instituted through such formal structures as governmental or social services or forged by professionals or community leaders. They were developed across communities—including places so war-torn they were bereft of all formal infrastructure. She concludes that this culture of conflict resolution and peacebuilding has been largely responsible for the success of the Mozambique peace accords.

This development in Mozambique was all the more remarkable when Nordstrom contrasted Mozambique with Angola. The country-wide culture of peace which emerged in Mozambique was truly a powerful force in the ability to achieve and maintain peace. Angola, on the other hand, does not show such a developed and shared culture of peace. While she found in Angola pockets of the kind of culture she discovered in Mozambique, they did not extend across the country to link various political and conflict groups. Angolans knew what she was talking about when she asked these questions, but they explained that conditions in Angola had not yet allowed such a culture to develop fully.

One could conclude that Mozambique was unique in forging such a sophisticated culture of peacebuilding, or postulate that such a process can be achieved in any war-afflicted country. Nordstrom does not have firm empirical data to support either conclusion, but her data suggest that the process discovered in Mozambique can be replicated in any other war-afflicted country. Moreover, the vast majority of Angolans she talked to said there were many areas where such conflict resolution and peacebuilding ideologies existed in Angola to build on.

Part of Mozambique's success came through recognizing that war left a devastated country and a war-traumatized population. The hundreds of Mozambican traditional doctors Nordstrom interviewed said that people exposed to war learned violence, aggression, and revenge as a way of life, and would continue these actions in their lives unless they

were reeducated to peace. Every community she visited had resources to reeducate people. And in most places every person affected by the war was invited to use these resources, from the level of the individual seeking medical consultation, to primary schools where teachers instituted classes in healing the trauma of war for all students. Many NGOs were also encouraged to realize that the peace process and the rebuilding of society had to take into account the trauma the society had sustained.

NOTES

1. Alfred Stepan, *Rethinking Military Politics: Brazil and the Southern Cone*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), pp. x-xi.

2. Robin Luckham, "Faustian Bargains: Bringing Military and Security Establishments under Democratic Control," in Robin Luckham et al., *Democratization in the South: The Jagged Wave*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996).

3. Stepan, *Rethinking Military Politics*.

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